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Witham Urban District.

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REPORT  
OF THE  
Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1937.

J. HATTON, M.D., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

TOGETHER WITH THE

REPORT OF THE  
SANITARY INSPECTOR.

WITHAM:

J. H. Clarke & Co., Printers,

70 High Street.



# WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Councillor D. J. MAIDMENT (*Chairman*).

Councillor W. W. BURROWS, J.P.	Councillor E. Smith, J.P.
„ H. E. READER.	„ J. M. WALMSLEY.
„ C. E. RICHARDS.	„ E. L. SMITH, J.P. ( <i>ex officio</i> ).

## PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS.

*Medical Officer of Health :*

J. HATTON, M.D., D.P.H.

*Sanitary Inspector :*

J. HOLDSWORTH, M.S.I.A., Certificate S.I.E.J.B., Certificate Meat and Foods.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICES,  
ST. PETER'S CLOSE,  
BRAINTREE.

*June, 1938.*

MR. CHAIRMAN, MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report on the health and sanitary conditions of the Witham Urban District for the year 1937.

The health of the District has been good and the death rate has again been low.

The inspection of houses in this District, with a view to slum clearance, has now been completed and during 1937 Official Representations for a further 15 Clearance Areas, comprising 45 houses were submitted to the Council.

The inspection of houses suitable for reconditioning has not made progress owing to changes in the clerical staff in the Sanitary Inspector's Office.

Work on the filter beds at Silver End Sewage Works which have been re-made has been completed, and a scheme for improving the sewerage system in the town of Witham has been submitted to the Ministry of Health.

I wish to thank the members of the Council for their help and support and the Council's Officers for their valued co-operation during the year.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN HATTON.



# VITAL STATISTICS OF DISTRICT FOR 1937 AND PREVIOUS YEARS

Year	Population estimated mid-year	BIRTHS			DEATHS										Natural Increase (Excess of Births over Deaths)
		Number	Rate	Rate England & Wales	TRANS- FERABLE			NETT							
					TOTAL NUMBER REGISTERED IN DISTRICT		of Non- Residents registered in District	of Residents not registered in District	Under 1 Year of Age		At all Ages				
					Number	Rate per 1000 net Births	Rate England & Wales	Number	Rate	Standard- ised Rate for comparison with E & W	Rate England & Wales				
1926	3980	63	15.8	17.8	2	31	70	43	10.8	9.7	11.6	20			
1927	4111	69	16.8	16.7	3	42	69	46	11.2	10.0	12.3	23			
1928	4342	77	17.7	16.7	4	52	65	46	10.6	9.5	11.7	31			
1929	4348	64	14.7	16.3	4	93	74	45	10.6	9.5	13.4	19			
1930	4348	66	15.2	16.3	3	46	60	50	11.5	10.3	11.4	16			
1931	4357	69	15.8	15.8	3	43	66	34	7.8	7.0	12.3	35			
1932	4512	72	15.9	15.3	1	27	65	42	9.3	8.3	12.0	30			
1933	6937	65	12.6	14.4	46	30	64	47	9.1	8.1	12.3	18			
1934	6970	110	15.7	14.8	11	27	59	71	10.1	10.2	11.8	39			
1935	7025	93	13.2	14.7	54	32	57	73	10.3	10.4	11.7	20			
1936	7150	97	13.5	14.8	56	82	59	76	10.6	10.7	12.1	21			
1937	7162	111	15.4	14.9*	51	18	58*	65	9.0	9.0	12.4*	46			

Area of District in acres land and inland water :— 7,329.

\* Provisional.

# WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT.

## Statistics and Social Conditions.

Area :—7,329 acres.

Population (estimated mid-1937) 7,162.

Number of inhabited houses 2,330.

Rateable value £37,520. Sum represented by a penny rate £138

The chief occupations are agriculture and steel works.

Unemployment figures have remained low during 1937.

## Extracts from Vital Statistics.

		Total	Males	Females		
Live Births	Legitimate	106	54	52	Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population	15.4
	Illegitimate	5	3	2		
Stillbirths		8	3	5		
	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births				...	67.1
Deaths		65	32	33	Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population	
		...	...	...		
		...	...	...	...	9.0

Deaths from puerperal causes :—

	Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births.
Puerperal sepsis	...	0
Other puerperal causes	...	0
Total	...	0

Death rate of infants under 1 year of age :—

All infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	18.0
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	...	18.8
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	...	0

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	...	12
„ „ Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	...	Nil

Deaths at various ages during 1937 :—

<i>Age</i>	<i>No of Deaths.</i>			
Under 1 year ...	...	...	...	2
1 year and under 2 ...	...	...	...	0
2 years and under 5 ...	...	...	...	1
5 years and under 15 ...	...	...	...	1
15 years and under 25 ...	...	...	...	1
25 years and under 35 ...	...	...	...	3
35 years and under 45 ...	...	...	...	1
45 years and under 55 ...	...	...	...	3
55 years and under 65 ...	...	...	...	11
65 years and under 75 ...	...	...	...	19
75 years and upwards ...	...	...	...	23
				—
Total	...	...	...	65

**Infantile Deaths.** The causes of death in children under the age of one year are shown below.

Net Deaths from stated causes at various ages under one year of age.

Causes of Death	Under 1 week	1—2 weeks	2—3 weeks	3—4 weeks	4 weeks and under 3 months	3—6 months	6—9 months	9—12 months	Total deaths under 1 year
Congenital Debility and Malformation, Premature birth...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TOTALS	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2

## CAUSES OF DEATH.

The table below was compiled from figures supplied by the Registrar General, and the classification is given according to the cause of death.

Cause of death						Males	Females
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Cerebro-spinal Fever...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Syphilis	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
General Paralysis of the Insane, tabes dorsalis	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Cancer, Malignant Disease	...	...	...	...	...	3	9
Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
Cerebral Hæmorrhage &c.	...	...	...	...	...	1	5
Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	8	6
Aneurism	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other Circulatory Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
Peptic Ulcer	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years)	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
Cirrhosis of Liver	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other Diseases of Liver, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	...	...	...	...	...	2	—
Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other Puerperal causes	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Congenital debility, premature birth, malformation, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Senility	...	...	...	...	...	4	2
Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other violence	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
Other defined diseases	...	...	...	...	...	3	2
Causes ill-defined or unknown	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Totals						32	33
						65	



## GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

### Public Health Officers.

Medical Officer of Health. Also acts as Medical Officer of Health of the United (Sanitary) Districts of Braintree and Dunmow, and Assistant Medical Officer of the Essex County Council.

Sanitary Inspector. J. Holdsworth, M.S.I.A., Cert. S.I.E.J.B., Cert. Meat and Foods.

### Laboratory Facilities.

The laboratory service is provided by the Essex County Council and the work is carried out at the Counties Public Health Laboratories, London. The following figures indicate the use made of this service by the medical practitioners of the District during 1936 :—

<i>Specimen.</i>				<i>No. examined.</i>
Diphtheria	...	...	...	18
Sputa	...	...	...	45
Typhoid	...	...	...	2
Ringworm	...	...	...	0
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	13
Total ...			...	78

### Ambulance Facilities.

A motor ambulance is provided at the Isolation Hospital at Heybridge for the transport of infectious cases. A modern ambulance belonging to the Urban District Council is also available for non-infectious and accident cases. The existing ambulance services are adequate for the needs of the area and co-ordination of ambulance services in this part of the County has been secured by a reciprocal arrangement between the various ambulance authorities in Witham and the surrounding districts.

### Nursing in the Home.

This service is undertaken by the Essex County Nursing Association and is satisfactory.



### Treatment Centres and Clinics.

These are provided by the Essex County Council. The following revised list gives details of the present arrangements :—

CHILD WELFARE.	Each month.	
Witham—Legion Hut, Mill Lane.	2nd & 4th Wed.	2.30 p.m.
Silver End—Village Hall.	1st & 3rd Thursday.	2.30 p.m.

ANTE-NATAL.		
Witham—Legion Hut, Mill Lane.	1st Monday.	2.30 p.m.
Silver End—Village Hall.	3rd Wednesday.	2.30 p.m.

WOMEN'S WELFARE.		
Treatment Centre, Coggeshall Road, Braintree.	1st & 3rd Wed.	10 a.m.

MINOR AILMENTS.		
Treatment Centre, Coggeshall Road, Braintree.	Tuesday.	10 a.m.
And by arrangement at Witham Schools.		

EYE CLINIC.		
Treatment Centre, Coggeshall Road, Braintree.	Monday.	10 a.m.

DENTAL CLINIC.		
Treatment Centre, Coggeshall Road, Braintree.	2nd & 4th Thurs.	10 a.m.
And by arrangement at Witham Schools.		

ORTHOPAEDIC CLINIC.		
Treatment Centre, Coggeshall Road, Braintree.	Wednesday.	2 p.m.

TUBERCULOSIS DISPENSARY.		
Treatment Centre, Coggeshall Road, Braintree.	Wednesday.	11.30 a.m.

MENTAL TREATMENT CLINIC.		
Chelmsford General Hospital, London Road.	Wednesday.	2.30 p.m.
Colchester General Hospital, Lexden Road.	Monday.	3 p.m.

VENEREAL DISEASES.		
Chelmsford General Hospital, London Road.	Friday.	11 a.m.
Colchester General Hospital, Lexden Road.	Monday	(Males) 6 p.m.
	Wednesday.	(Females) 4 p.m.
		(Males) 5.30 p.m.
	Friday.	(Females) 2 p.m.
		(Males) 4 p.m.

## **Hospitals.**

### **Voluntary.**

The General Hospitals at Colchester, Chelmsford and Braintree admit patients from the Witham Urban District.

### **Public.**

**ISOLATION HOSPITAL.** The Isolation Hospital at Heybridge, which serves Witham, provides accommodation for 28 patients. A scheme prepared by the County Council under Section 63 of the Local Government Act, 1929, is still under consideration. This scheme proposes centralisation of the work of existing isolation hospitals in larger and more up-to-date institutions.

**SMALLPOX HOSPITAL.** The County Council Scheme under Section 63 of the Local Government Act, 1929, for providing accommodation for the treatment of cases of smallpox occurring in the administrative county is now in operation. The County Council in collaboration with the Corporation of Colchester, has provided a new smallpox hospital at Mile End, Colchester. This was ready for the reception of patients in May, 1936. Cases of smallpox arising in this District will be removed to this hospital for treatment and the expenses of the County Council in this connection will be defrayed as special expenses of the part of the county concerned. The scheme also provides for the services of consultant medical officers if assistance is required in the diagnosis of doubtful cases of smallpox ; but it does not alter in any way the normal duties of a Local Sanitary Authority in the event of outbreaks of smallpox.

**P.A.C. HOSPITAL.** The hospital wards of Braintree Public Assistance Committee's Institution have been enlarged, they now provide accommodation for 120 patients. This institution is under the control of the Essex County Council.

**MATERNITY.** The Maternity block attached to the Chelmsford Institution is available for cases from Witham. There is also a maternity hospital of ten beds under construction at Braintree.

## **Mortuaries.**

There is no public Mortuary in the Urban District. This means that in some cases bodies must be kept in very unsuitable premises. There is also no accommodation for post-mortem examinations. A new Mortuary and post-mortem room are urgently needed in this District.

## **Legislation in Force.**

No new Acts or bye-laws were adopted during 1937.

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

### Water.

During the year water has been pumped from the Council's Waterworks at Braintree Road, in addition to the supplies received from the Silver End Development Company at Bradwell Spring. The supply has been adequate for the needs of the District. New pumping machinery is to be installed at the Braintree Road Waterworks, but the question of purchase of the Bradwell Spring system by the Urban District Council is still in abeyance.

The public water supplies of the District are controlled by chemical and bacteriological examination. Samples are submitted for analysis at least twice in each year.

The Bradwell Spring water, although hard in character, is both from the chemical and bacteriological aspect of good quality. It is pure and wholesome and the hardness does not exceed that of many public water supplies which have been consumed for many years with no ill effects.

BRADWELL SPRING. A sample of water taken on December 9th was reported on by the Analyst as follows:—

Appearance.—Clear and bright.

#### *Chemical results in parts per 100,000.*

Colour :	Normal.	Odour : None.			
Reaction pH	Neutral 7.0	Free Carbonic Acid	None		
Electric Conductivity at 20° C.	...	...	...	675	
Total Solids, 180° C.	...	...	...	...	45.0
Chlorine in Chlorides	...	...	...	...	2.9
Nitrogen in Nitrates	...	...	...	...	0.46
Nitrites	...	...	...	...	Absent
Hardness : Permanent	...	...	...	...	10.0
Temporary	...	...	...	...	26.0
Total	...	...	...	...	36.0
Metals	...	...	...	...	Absent
Free Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0.0000
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0.0000
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hrs. at 80° F.	...	...	...	...	0.0000

#### *Bacteriological Results.*

No. of Bacteria per c.c.—

On Agar in 3 days at 20° C.	...	...	...	0
On Agar in 24 hours at 37° C.	...	...	...	0
On Agar in 48 hours at 37° C.	...	...	...	42
The Bacillus Coli	...	...	...	Absent in 50 c.c.
Bacillus Welchii (B. Enteritidis Sporogenes)	..	..	..	— c.c



REPORT. This is a clear and bright water of normal colour and of neutral reaction. The water contains no excess of saline matter, is hard in character, free from metals and of a high degree of organic and bacterial purity. It is a pure and wholesome water suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

BRAINTREE ROAD WATERWORKS. A sample of water taken on December 9th was analysed and reported on as follows :

*Chemical results in parts per 100,000*

Appearance	...	...	Bright, slight mineral deposit.
Colour :	Normal.		Odour : None.
Reaction pH	...	Neutral 8.3.	Free Carbonic Acid, Nil
Electric Conductivity at 20° C.	...	...	183.0
Total Solids, 180° C.	...	...	122.0
Chlorine in Chlorides	...	...	45.0
Nitrogen in Nitrates	...	...	Nil
Nitrites	...	...	Absent
Hardness : Permanent	...	...	0.0
Temporary	...	...	5.5
Total	...	...	5.5
Metals	...	...	Iron, 0.010
Free Ammonia	...	...	0.0920
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	...	0.0000
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hrs. at 80° F.	...	...	0.020

*Bacteriological results*

No of Bacteria per c.c.	
On Agar in 3 days at 20° C.	0
On Agar in 1 day at 37° C.	7
On Agar in 2 days at 37° C.	9
The Bacillus Coli	Present in — Absent in 50 c.c.
Bacillus Welchii (B. Enteritidis Sporogenes)	
	Present in — Absent in — c.c.

REPORT. This is a bright water containing a few particles of mineral matter in suspension. It is of normal colour and on the alkaline side of neutrality. The water contains an appreciable, though not excessive amount of saline matter, is soft in character, contains only a negligible trace of iron and is of a high degree of organic and bacterial quality.

It is a pure and wholesome water suitable for purposes of public supply.



CONSUMPTION. The Surveyor has supplied the following figures :—

Witham and Rivenhall. Total pumped for the year was 48,621,137 gallons, representing 26·02 gallons per head per day.

Silver End. The estimated consumption for the year was 24,550,000 gallons, which is equivalent to 35·00 gallons per head per day.

During 1937 the water-mains were extended as follows —  
Church St., 400 yards ; Maltings Lane 330 yards.  
82 new connections to the mains were made.

### **Drainage and Sewerage.**

The effluents from the Witham Sewage Works have been satisfactory during 1937 with one exception. Those from the Silver End Sewage Works taken during the first half of 1937 all failed to comply with the County standard of purity. The work of remaking the filter beds at this works was completed in June.

Samples of effluent taken since then have been of the required standard of purity.

During 1937 the following new sewers were laid :—

Church St.	...	...	...	500 yards.
------------	-----	-----	-----	------------

77 new connections were made.

### **Rivers and Streams.**

There is pollution of the River Brain near Guithavon Street. Witham, from properties in the neighbourhood of Blunts Hall, A scheme for draining this area into the public sewers is under consideration.

### **Closet Accommodation.**

See report of Sanitary Inspector, page 30.

### **Public Cleansing.**

See report of Sanitary Inspector, page 30.

### **Sanitary Inspection of the Area.**

See report of Sanitary Inspector, pages 22, 23 & 24.

### **Shops.**

See report of Sanitary Inspector, pages 26 and 30.

### **Smoke Abatement.**

See report of Sanitary Inspector, page 29.

### Swimming Bath.

The Public Swimming Pool was again used freely by the Public. Difficulty has been experienced in maintaining the water in the pool in a satisfactory state of purity and the District Council are considering the provision of a new pool equipped with modern filtration and purification plant on another site. It is doubtful whether the existing pool will open to the Public during the 1938 season.

### Eradication of Bed Bugs.

	<i>Council Houses.</i>	<i>Others.</i>
1. No. of houses infested ...	0	7
No. disinfested ...	0	7
2. In disinfesting premises of bugs the following procedure is adopted :—		

Firstly all skirtings, architraves, picture rails, etc., are eased away from the walls.

Two floorboards are taken up in each room ; all fireplaces, air ventilators, etc., are sealed off with brown paper.

The premises are then fumigated by means of Cimex blocks. The premises are sealed and left for 6 hours.

After fumigation has taken place, and the premises are thoroughly ventilated—

All skirtings, architraves, picture rails, etc., are removed entirely, any plugs in walls are withdrawn ; the plug holes sprayed with Solution “ D ” and then enlarged ; larger plugs are then fitted.

The back of all removed woodwork is treated with Solution “ D ” and then re-fitted.

This procedure has proved effective and in no instance has there been a recurrence of infestation.

3. In future, before persons are allowed to occupy Council houses, their furniture, etc., will be examined and if necessary fumigated.

4. The work of disinfestation is carried out by the Local Authority or under the supervision of an Officer of the Local Authority.

5. No measures have been taken by way of supervision or education of tenants to prevent infestation or re-infestation after cleansing.

### Schools.

There are five public elementary schools in the Urban District. The general conditions and water supply of which are satisfactory.

During 1937 infectious disease in schools was controlled by the exclusion of individual children. No closure of schools or departments was found to be necessary.

## Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces..

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

Premises (1)	Number of		
	Inspections (2)	Written Notices. (3)	Occupiers prosecuted (4)
FACTORIES... (Including Factory Laundries)	2	...	...
WORKSHOPS (Including Workshop Laundries)	16	...	...
WORKPLACES (Other than Outworkers' Premises)	0	...	...
Total	18	...	...

### Defects found in Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Particulars. 1	Number of Defects.			Number of offences in respect of which Prosecutions were instituted 5
	Found 2	Remedied 3	Referred to H.M. Inspector 4	
<i>Nuisances under the Public Health Acts :</i>				
Want of cleanliness	...	...	...	...
Want of ventilation	...	...	...	...
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...
Want of drainage of floors	...	...	...	...
Other nuisances...	...	...	...	...
Sanitary Accommodation	...	...	...	...
} insufficient	...	...	...	...
} unsuitable or defective	...	...	...	...
} not separate for sexes	...	...	...	...
<i>Offences under the Factory &amp; Workshop Acts :</i>				
Illegal occupation of underground bakehouse (s. 101)	...	...	...	...
Other offences	...	...	...	...
(Excluding offences relating to outwork and offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921):				
Total	...	...	...	...

Outwork in unwholesome Premises, Section 108

...

Nil.



### Housing.

During 1937 the detailed inspection of houses, with a view to clearance under Section 25 of the Housing Act, 1936, was completed and further Official Representations for 15 Clearance Areas, comprising 45 houses were submitted to the Council. Details of Official Representations made to the District Council during 1937 and previous years are given below.

Year.	Number of Clearance Areas represented.	Number of Houses therein.
1935	2	9
1936	32	172
1937	15	45
Total	<hr/> 49 <hr/>	<hr/> 226 <hr/>

It is estimated that there are 1,600 working class houses in the Urban District.

The following Clearance Orders in respect of Clearance Areas have been confirmed by the Ministry of Health after Public Inquiry :—

Year	Number of Clearance Areas. confirmed.	Number of Houses therein.
1936	2	9
1937	9	53
Total	<hr/> 11 <hr/>	<hr/> 62 <hr/>

A Public Inquiry with regard to the outstanding Clearance Areas is expected early in 1938.

Owing to changes in the staff in the Sanitary Inspector's Office it has not been possible to maintain satisfactory progress with the detailed inspection of houses which are suitable for reconditioning under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936. There are still many working class houses in the District, which, though not totally unfit, have nevertheless serious defects which call for remedy and it is important that every effort should be made to press on with the work of reconditioning in such cases. I hope, therefore, that adequate assistance will be provided for the Sanitary Inspector in the new year.



No. of Houses erected during the year :			
(1) By the Urban District Council	...	...	6
(2) By other Local Authorities	...	...	0
(3) By other bodies and persons	...	...	21
Total			27

1. Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year :
  - (i) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... 81
  - (b) Number of Inspections made for the purpose ... 81
  - (ii) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (i) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ... 81
  - (b) (Number of Inspections made for the purpose ... 81
  - (iii) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... 53
  - (iv) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... 28
2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices :  
 Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ... 7
3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year :
  - A. Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :
    - (i) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... None
    - (ii) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :
      - (a) By owners ... 8
      - (b) By local Authority in default of owners ... None
  - B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts :
    - (i) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... None

(ii) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :					
(a)	By owners	...	...	...	None
(b)	By local authority in default of owners	...	...	...	None
C. Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :					
(i)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition orders were made	...	...	...	2
(ii)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition orders	...	...	...	20
(iii)	Number of written undertakings accepted	...	...	...	None
D. Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :					
(i)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing orders were made	...	...	...	1
(ii)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	...	...	...	None
Houses demolished voluntarily					
					1
Housing Act, 1935—Overcrowding :					
(a)	(i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	...	...	...	None
	(ii) Number of families dwelling therein	...	...	...	None
	(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein	...	...	...	None
(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	...	None
(c)	(i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	...	...	4
	(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases	...	...	...	32
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded, after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	...	...	...	None

### Inspection and Supervision of Food.

MILK SUPPLY. The premises concerned in the production or sale of milk are inspected regularly, and samples are taken for bacteriological and biological examination.

The consumption of milk has increased of recent years but at  $\frac{2}{5}$  pint per head daily it is still too low in this country. An all round increase to about 1 pint daily is very desirable and will result in improved national and individual health and fitness.

The nutritive value of milk cannot be stressed too often. Milk is unique among foods and is of especial value to growing children. It is more than a food in the ordinary sense as it contains important body building and protective elements. In virtue of these milk promotes growth and health and protects those who drink it from disease. Milk must, however, be safe, that is, it must be free from active bacterial infection which may cause disease in human beings.

The Public cannot enjoy the maximum benefits of milk drinking until all milk which is consumed is safe. At the present time this is not the case and illness can result from the drinking of unsafe milk.

The problem can be solved by one of two methods.

1. Providing a safe supply at the source and thereafter protecting it from contamination. The difficulties of providing a universally safe raw milk supply are enormous, and for economic reasons alone it is impracticable to do so now. The official machinery for improving milk at the source is continuously at work and has produced excellent results, but at present Tuberculin Tested milk is the only milk which can be recommended for consumption without treatment.

2. Treatment which will ensure that all milk is safe before it is consumed.

Treatment can be applied to supplies either by pasteurisation or by boiling. Pasteurisation is largely practised on a commercial scale and when efficiently carried out renders milk safe and does not lower its value to any material extent. Boiling on the other hand does modify the nutritive value of milk but should be resorted to whenever supplies of Tuberculin Tested or Pasteurised milk cannot be obtained.

See also Report of Sanitary Inspector, page 29.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS. Routine inspection of meat, slaughter-houses, shops and places where food is prepared is carried out by the Council's Sanitary Inspector. Details of this work are given in the Sanitary Inspector's Report on pages 27 and 28.

There are six private slaughter-houses in the Urban District, most of which are small. During 1937, 96.7% of the animals slaughtered for human food were inspected. This figure is a high one in the circumstances and is very satisfactory. The work, however, makes heavy demands on the ordinary time of the Sanitary Inspector, as well as on Sunday and outside normal office hours.



The provision of a central abbatoir under the Council's control and the closing of private slaughter-houses in the district would simplify the work of meat inspection. Supervision of the work in a number of private slaughter-houses is never as satisfactory as it is in a central abbatoir, and there are few civilised countries in which this system of private slaughter-houses is still allowed.

Some modification of the existing law on this subject appears, however, to be necessary before the abolition of private slaughter-houses can be general. The cost, including the cost of compensation which is involved, at present is heavy.

**ADULTERATION, ETC.** Action taken under the Food and Drugs (Adulteration) Act, 1928, the Artificial Cream Act, 1929, the Public Health (Condensed Milk) Regulations, 1923 and 1927, the Public Health (Dried Milk) Regulations, 1923 and 1927, and the Public Health (Preservatives, etc., in Food) Regulations, 1925 to 1927. This work is undertaken by the County Council.

**CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF FOOD.** This work is carried out by the Essex County Council and the samples submitted are examined by Dr. Dyer, the County Analyst.

**NUTRITION.** Information on this subject is given at the schools, clinics and welfare centres in the District.

**SHELL-FISH.** There are no shell-fish beds or layings in the Urban District.

Shell-fish which are marketed in the town are obtained mainly from layings on the Essex Coast.

### **Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Disease.**

Fifteen cases of infectious disease (other than tuberculosis) were notified during the year. Details of these are given in the adjoining table. There have been no cases of meningococcal meningitis. One case of diphtheria was notified, which was promptly removed to the Isolation Hospital and treated with diphtheria antitoxin. This case of diphtheria was of the mild or intermediate type. No cases of diphtheria gravis were seen during 1937. The incidence of scarlet fever was low. The disease generally was mild in type and serious complications were absent. While the present mild form of the disease is prevalent "missed" cases, that is, cases where the infection is unrecognised, inevitably arise and these patients acting as intermediaries or carriers may spread the disease, possibly in more severe form, to others. For this reason removal of all notified cases of scarlet fever to the Isolation Hospital proves to be less effective than might be expected in checking the spread of scarlet fever infection.



As far as possible, cases of scarlet fever should be isolated at home and the admission of cases to the Isolation Hospital should be limited to those which would generally fall into the following categories :—

Insufficient or unsuitable accommodation at home for isolation and treatment.

Severe type of illness or complications necessitating hospital treatment.

Lack of nursing facilities at home owing to illness of parents or other causes.

Occurrence of a case in a house adjoining business or public premises and particularly those where milk is produced or handled.

Cases where the head of the home would lose wages if nursing at home were insisted on.

No cases of dysentery or malaria occurred in the Urban District during the year. Nine cases of pneumonia were notified, none of which presented any unusual features.

The Maldon Isolation Hospital Authorities are unable to admit cases of measles and whooping cough as a routine owing to limited accommodation. Shortening the period of stay in hospital of uncomplicated cases of scarlet fever and careful selection of the cases admitted might, however, even at present improve the position in favour of these cases. It is important, therefore, that the new Isolation Hospital which is planned under Section 63 of the Local Government Act, shall include adequate provision for the treatment of cases of measles and whooping cough when this is necessary. The mortality from these diseases and their complications is, unfortunately, more serious than is generally recognised.

Intimations of illness and disease are received from the schools, and acting on this information the exclusion of individual children or the closure of schools or school departments is arranged, by the Medical Officer of Health when necessary.

Influenza and whooping cough were prevalent in the Urban District during the early part of the year. No closure of schools or school departments was found to be necessary.

No action has been taken at special clinics in the District to provide artificial immunization against diphtheria, and none has been taken in regard to the use of measles serum for prophylaxis.

## Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) for the Year, 1937.

Notifiable Disease	Total	Under 1 year	1—2	2—3	3—4	4—5	5—10	10—15	15—20	20—35	35—45	45—65	65 and over	Cases sent to hospital	Deaths
Smallpox ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever ...	4	...	...	...	1	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	4	...
Diphtheria ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Enteric Fever, including Typhoid ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Peurperal Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Peurperal Pyrexia ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia ...	9	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	3	2	2	1	...	1
Erysipelas ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1
Totals ...	15	...	...	...	1	...	3	2	...	4	2	2	1	6	2

### Prevention of Blindness.

No action has been taken by the District Council under Section 66 of the Public Health Act, 1925, for the prevention of blindness or for the treatment of persons suffering from any disease or injury to the eyes. This work is undertaken in the District by the Essex County Council.

### Tuberculosis.

No action has been taken during 1937 under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, relating to persons suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis employed in the milk trade or under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1925, relating to the compulsory removal to a hospital of persons suffering from tuberculosis.

#### New cases and Mortality during 1937.

Age periods.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 to 1 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1 „ 5 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5 „ 10 ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
10 „ 15 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15 „ 20 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20 „ 25 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
25 „ 35 ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
35 „ 45 ...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
45 „ 55 ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
55 „ 65 ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 & upwards	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...
Totals ...	4	2	...	1	1	1	...	...

The percentage of deaths of un-notified cases is nil.

## Sanitary Inspector's Report for 1937.

COUNCIL OFFICES,  
COLLINGWOOD ROAD,  
WITHAM, ESSEX.

*January, 1938*

*To the Chairman and Members of the Witham Urban  
District Council.*

MR. CHAIRMAN, MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you my Annual Report for the year 1937.

The inspection of houses with a view to Slum Clearance has now been completed.

The inspection of houses suitable for re-conditioning has been held up owing to the fact that since May, 1937, I have not had sufficient clerical assistance. I hope that suitable additional assistance will be given to me in the new year so that outside work may be proceeded with more rapidly.



## The Number and Nature of Inspections made—3,339.

### DWELLING-HOUSES—

Number of houses inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations ... ..	81
Re-inspections under Housing Regulations ... ..	689
Number of re-inspections other than under Housing Regulations ... ..	184
Number of visits made as a result of Complaints received	166

### NUMBER OF VISITS TO—

Butchers' shops ... ..	441
Fried fish shops ... ..	4
Ice Cream shops ... ..	5
Factories ... ..	2
Workshops ... ..	16
Number of visits Under Shops Acts ... ..	5
Other inspections or visits ... ..	503
	—
	976

### DRAINS TESTED—

Chemical test applied ... ..	2
Water test applied ... ..	3
	—
	5

### INFECTIOUS DISEASE—

Primary inspections re Infectious Disease ... ..	9
Re-inspections re Infectious Disease ... ..	2
Number of rooms disinfected after Infectious Disease ... ..	9
	—
	20

### VERMINOUS PREMISES—

Verminous rooms fumigated ... ..	33
Milk samples taken ... ..	7
Water samples taken ... ..	8
Visits to Controlled premises (see below) ... ..	1,170

Total ... ..	3,339
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## CONTROLLED PREMISES.

## Details of inspection during 1937.

Regulated Buildings, Trades, &c.	No. in District	No. Inspected	Total No. of Inspections	Notices served	Notices complied with	Legal Proceedings
Common Lodging Houses ... ..	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bakehouses ... ..	5	5	10	0	1	0
Cowsheds ... ..	13	13	51	0	0	0
Dairies and Milkshops ... ..	16	16	56	0	0	0
Slaughter Houses ... ..	6	6	1053	0	0	0
Knackers Yards ... ..	0	0	0	0	0	0
Offensive Trades ... ..	0	0	0	0	0	0

The notice complied with in respect of 1 Bakehouse is the result of notice served in 1936.

**Nuisances, etc., on Books, with Number of Notices Served.**

Number of Notices on books, 31st December, 1936 ...	101
Number of nuisances or insanitary conditions reported during the year ... ..	192
Number of Informal notices served during the year ...	192
Number of Statutory Notices served during the year ...	—
Number of Nuisances or Insanitary conditions abated ...	165
Number of notices not complied with, 31st December, 1937	49

You will notice that there is a discrepancy of 79 in the above figures, this is owing to the fact that I have cancelled the cases of insufficient drains brought forward from 1936.

You will remember that I was instructed to delay action until such time as any nuisance shall arise therefrom.

These instances will therefore be re-entered if or when any such nuisance occurs.

**NOTICES NOT COMPLIED WITH INCLUDE—**

Housing repairs : Housing Acts ... ..	39
Insufficient drains ... ..	4
Foul water courses ... ..	1
Insufficient ashbins ... ..	4
Insufficient sanitary accommodation to Café ... ..	1
Total ...	49

**Summary of Work carried out as the result of Notice being Served.****HOUSE REPAIRS—**

Chimneys brickwork made good ... ..	1
Chimneys brickjoints re-pointed ... ..	5
Roofs repaired ... ..	5
Walls re-pointed ... ..	18
Wall underpinned ... ..	1
Damp proof courses fitted ... ..	9
New window sills fitted ... ..	6
Sub-floor ventilation ... ..	5
Yard paving repaired ... ..	12
Drains repaired, overhauled, re-laid or extended... ..	16
New inspection chamber built ... ..	1
Interceptors to drains ... ..	1
Water supply improved ... ..	7
Defective ashbins replaced ... ..	125
Washing accommodation improved ... ..	3
W.C. repaired ... ..	1
New flushing cistern fitted ... ..	7
New W.C. pans fitted ... ..	1
Floors repaired or re-newed ... ..	27
Damp walls repaired ... ..	18
Wall plaster repaired ... ..	7
Walls decorated ... ..	24
Ceiling plaster repaired ... ..	6
Windows repaired ... ..	32
Window area increased ... ..	13
Doors repaired ... ..	11
Firegrates repaired or renewed ... ..	2
New sinks provided ... ..	9
Waste pipes to sinks ... ..	8
Lighting to stairs improved ... ..	8
Handrail to stairs fitted ... ..	8
Stair-treads repaired ... ..	3
Permanently ventilated food stores provided ... ..	12
Permanent ventilation provided to rooms ... ..	13



## OTHER NUISANCES ABATED—

Verminous rooms disinfested	...	...	...	...	37
Accumulations removed	...	...	...	...	7
Rat infestation abated	...	...	...	...	2
Water courses cleared	...	...	...	...	1
Over crowding abated	...	...	...	...	4

## SHOPS ACTS—

W.C. accommodation improved	...	...	...	...	1
Additional W.C.'s built	...	...	...	...	1
Screens provided to W.C.'s	...	...	...	...	1
Cloak-room provided	...	...	...	...	1

## MILK AND FOODS—

New cowsheds erected	...	...	...	...	1
Cowsheds limewashed	...	...	...	...	26
Cowsheds improved	...	...	...	...	3
New dairies provided	...	...	...	...	1
Dairies limewashed	...	...	...	...	26
Dairies improved	...	...	...	...	1
Fold yards improved	...	...	...	...	2
Slaughter-houses limewashed	...	...	...	...	6
Bakehouses limewashed	...	...	...	...	10
Fish frier's cleansed	...	...	...	...	1

The following houses, which have been the subject of proceedings under the Housing Acts, have now been demolished.

PROPERTIES DEMOLISHED UNDER HOUSING ACTS  
DURING THE YEAR 1937—

No. 48 Maldon Road, Witham.

1 Maltings Cottages, Maltings Road, Witham.

2                   "                   "

3                   "                   "

4                   "                   "

5                   "                   "

6                   "                   "

23 Mill Lane, Witham.

25           "           "

27           "           "

29           "           "

17 Newland Street, Witham.

5 Guithavon Valley, Witham.

6           "           "

7           "           "

18 Powers Hall, End, Witham.

19           "           "

20           "           "

108 Newland Street, Witham.

5 Powers Hall End, Witham.

DEMOLISHED VOLUNTARILY.

106 Newland Street, Witham.

### Inspection and Supervision of Food.

#### MEAT INSPECTION—

There are six slaughter-houses in the District. These have been visited regularly and all are kept in good condition.

During the year 3,911 animals were slaughtered, 3,780 of which were inspected. I should like to point out that, with the exception of the holiday periods, 100% inspection has been maintained.

The total weight of Meat and Offal condemned as a result of this inspection was : 9,497½ lbs., or 4 tons 4 cwts. 89½ lbs. Of that amount, the weight of Tubercular Meat or Offal was 2 tons, 14 cwt., 22 lbs.

Of the 3,780 animals inspected, 17.9% were affected with disease, 259 or 6.9% were affected with tuberculosis, and 418 or 11% were affected with other diseases.

Below is a table which shows the comparative susceptibility to disease of the various animals killed.

### Carcases Inspected and Condemned

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed ...	681	8	75	1549	1598
Number inspected ...	657	8	72	1504	1539
All diseases except Tuberculosis. Whole carcasses con- demned.	—	1	—	11	5
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	86	2	—	237	76
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuber- culosis.	13·09%	37·5%	—	16·51%	5·26%
Tuberculosis only. Whole carcasses con- demned.	1	1	1	1	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	64	1	—	1	189
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuber- culosis.	9·89%	25%	1·39%	·13%	12·28%

In addition to the foregoing, Meat in the Butchers' shops is inspected regularly. Upon no occasion was unsound Meat or Offal found to be exposed for sale.

#### ANTE-MORTEM INSPECTION.

The circumstances of the District are such, that Ante-Mortem inspection cannot be carried out.



## MILK.

There are 13 producers of milk in the District, and one dairy business where milk is purchased in bulk and subjected to pasteurisation.

Of the producers, six produce Accredited Milk and two produce Tuberculin Tested milk.

The whole of the premises are kept in a satisfactory state.

Samples of milk are taken in the District for Bacteriological Examination from time to time and, with three exceptions, proved satisfactory. The three Producers have taken steps to prevent any further slips of this nature and no further bad samples have been taken.

## BAKEHOUSES.

There are five bakehouses in the District ; these are kept in a satisfactory state.

## ICE CREAM.

One application was received for registration as a Producer and Purveyor of Ice Cream. The premises were found to be satisfactory and the application was granted.

## SMOKE ABATEMENT.

No action was taken during the year.

## RATS AND MICE (DESTRUCTION) ACT, 1919.

Frequent attempts have been made throughout the year to free the House Refuse tips and the Sewage Works of rats, with good results, so that now very few rats are to be found on these sites.

The method chiefly employed was that of gassing the rats in their runs. "Horo" tubes were used for this purpose.

In other instances the drain-testing machine was used, sulphur candles were burnt in the machine and the hose connection was inserted in the run, the sulphurous gas then being pumped into the runs.

During National Rat Week, poison baits were issued to smallholders, farmers and others. In addition, the gas gun was used in places known to be infested with rats.

Upon request, the Council's workmen disinfested 2 premises of rats by means of the gas gun.

## CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Approximate number of Water Closets	...	...	2,084
„ „ Pail Closets	...	...	254
„ „ Privies	...	...	29

There have been no changes from the conservancy system during the year.

The majority of the houses which at the moment are provided with Privies are the subject of Slum Clearance Proceedings, and it is hoped that in the near future the whole of these insanitary conveniences will be disposed of.

## SCHOOLS.

No inspections were made of Schools during year. All receive their water from the public supply and, with the exception of the Rivenhall Church School, all have adequate and satisfactory sanitary accommodation.

## SHOPS ACTS.

In two instances sanitary accommodation was improved.

## HOUSE REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

The system of Refuse Collection which has been in operation since the 1st April, 1936, has proved to be a very successful venture. The whole of the House Refuse is being collected and disposed of within four days.

With regard to the Disposal of House Refuse, all the Refuse is now tipped at the Collingwood Road Tip where the confining of tipping operations to one point has made it possible to keep the tip in a better state and the breeding of rats is thus discouraged.

In conclusion, I should like to express my appreciation of the assistance and support received during the year from the Medical Officer of Health, and other Officials, and also from the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee and Council.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

J. HOLDSWORTH,

*Sanitary Inspector.*









